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ABSTRACT

This paper describes four cases of intervention in the relations between groups of widely differing social status and power. "Dialogs" between high corporate executives and social activities from urban poverty areas in three cities were supported by a foundation interested in promoting long term cooperation between the groups on social projects of benefit to the cities involved. The outcomes of the four cases are examined for theoretical implications for the third party intervention to improve such vertical intergroup relations. Four general thrusts of third party activity are discussed: (1) diffusing the impact of power asymmetries, (2) managing boundaries and organizing premises, (3) influencing interaction patterns, and (4) institutionalizing change. (Author)

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INTERVENTION IN VERTICAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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INTERVENTION IN VERTICAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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I. Introduction

The term "vertical intergroup relations" refers to the relations between groups that differ with respect to the power they hold over one another. Although problems of intergroup relations have interested behavioral scientists for years, there has been relatively little attention paid to the complications created by the combination of intergroup differences and power differences. By the same token, although a good deal of attention has been paid to third party intervention to improve relations between groups that are relatively equal in power (e.g., Blake, Shepard and Mouton, 1964; Alderfer, 1975), there has been less systematic investigation of interventions in vertical intergroup relations.

Unfortunately, many of the most explosive intergroup tensions in modern societies grow out of vertical intergroup relations. The tensions between blacks and whites in the United States, the strife between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, the struggle between independent truckers and the ICC, and the tensions between the United Farm Workers and the Teamsters can all be described as intergroup conflicts in which one party holds more power than the other. More systematic understanding of such conflicts and the processes of constructive intervention is very greatly needed.

The combination of power asymmetries and intergroup differences is particularly likely to produce explosive and violent outbreaks of conflict. The dynamics of the two conditions are potentially mutually reinforcing.

Research on intergroup conflict suggests that the parties develop negative stereotypes of each other, restrict or distort the information flow between them, distrust and misunderstand each other's intentions, and create ideological positions that justify mutual exploitation (Blake and Mouton, 1961; Deutsch, 1965). Intergroup conflict tends to have a regenerative, self-fulfilling quality: action based on low trust and negative stereotypes elicits counter-action that fulfills those expectations, and so justifies further cycles of escalation.

Research on the impacts of power asymmetries suggests that subordinates develop strong feelings about their superiors, and that subordinates carefully control the flow of information to their superiors (Smith, 1974: Jamieson and Thomas, 1974). Efforts by superiors to get information from subordinates can confirm the latter's original anxieties and so lead to escalating cycles of negative feelings and covert conflict.

Power asymmetries and intergroup conflict in combination can produce concealed tensions that occasionally explode -- from the vantage point of the superiors, without warning -- into intense overt conflict or even violence. The dynamics of power asymmetry compel the subordinate group to disguise its dissatisfaction for self-protection until

the pressure is too intense to conceal further or until the group has developed a sufficient power base to feel safe in more overt expression. In either case, the eventual expression of conflict is likely to be explosive.

This paper will describe several cases of third party intervention to promote cooperation between vertically related groups. The cases vary in outcome as well as on a variety of other dimensions; they all brought together groups from opposite sides of some of the most fundamental cleavages in our society, including age, wealth, race, and sex. The cases will then be discussed in terms of several conceptual perspectives relevant to vertical intergroup intervention.

II. The Interventions

The four cases all took place under the aegis of a foundation whose founder sought to catalyze collaboration between the "energy and idealism" of youth and the "money, access, and know-how" of the Establishment on behalf of social service projects in urban areas. The foundation helped to organize and financially support "dialogues" in several large cities between "Establishment" representatives (mostly chief executive officers of large organizations) and young social activists (mostly from poverty-stricken, minority-group areas in the cities). The dialogues were convened for the purposes of (1) promoting communication between two groups that seldom interacted, and (2) organizing some cooperative project in which the resources of the various participants could benefit the city. Most dialogues took the form of a retreat for several days with a third

party facilitator provided by the foundation. Foundation staff recruited participants, helped to organize the initial dialogue, hired dialogue facilitators,* and then followed up as observers afterwards, but the foundation provided no direct financial support after the initial dialogue because it wanted subsequent efforts to be locally supported.

Four dialogues will be discussed here. They represent issues encountered in all the dialogues, and provide enough background for the discussion to follow.

A. Communication

The "Establishment" side of this dialogue was composed of executives and professionals who were relatively "young and action-oriented." The "youth" representatives came from a variety of social action projects in the area. The "youth" group, like the "Establishment" group, was all white though it included several women. Although the dialogue was expected to be focused on the "youth-Establishment gap," the participants soon discovered that there was relatively little difference in their ages or their social backgrounds even though their choices of life-style were drastically different.

The differences in life style did not mobilize the expected intergroup energy or conflict across the "gap." Some time was

*The author was a facilitator in both the "Fight" and "Cooperation" dialogues, and talked extensively with the facilitators of the other two.

spent in discussion of life style differences, problems of interpersonal communication, and a search for a possible project the participants might jointly undertake. But no project emerged as a central energy source, and most of the dialogue was devoted to efforts to develop improved interpersonal communication. The discussion of intergroup, as opposed to interpersonal, differences drew relatively little attention.

Although most participants agreed that they had communicated with one another successfully during the dialogue, no cooperative project was undertaken nor were any follow-up activities planned. The dialogue created interpersonal bonds without creating any longer term focus for cooperation among the participants.

B. Withdrawal

This dialogue brought together the business leadership of a large metropolitan area and the leaders of a black community organization that had evolved from a street gang. The "youth" representatives in this case came from one organization rather than a variety of affiliations, and so had a long history of work together. This dialogue also brought together representatives of extremely different cultures, with vastly different perspectives on the larger society.

The dialogue took the form of several short meetings focused on negotiating a specific project involving jobs for members of the community organization, instead of the relatively unstructured retreat designed to create a project on the basis of improved

communications. Interaction in these meetings tended to be conflictful. It was difficult for either group to understand the other's point of view or concerns. Nonetheless, it was agreed that the parties would undertake a project to provide job opportunities for carefully screened and guaranteed members of the organization.

Although the project was launched and several people hired, it soon began to falter. Business support began to evaporate as it became clear that many job seekers had police records, and a widely-publicized attempt to murder one employee catalyzed the retreat of the remaining businessmen. A few newly-developed relationships between group members survived, but long-term cooperation between the participating groups did not.

C. Fight

The participants in this dialogue included chief executives of a variety of large businesses and corporations headquartered in a metropoiltan area and young people active in social projects in the city's black, Polish, Puerto Rican and Appalachian communities. Although most of the "Establishment" representatives knew each other before the dialogue, time constraints made it impossible for there to be much pre-dialogue contact among participants.

The dialogue began with efforts to find out more about the participants as individuals, and then moved to an exchange of views of the problems of the city. This discussion took the form of "youth" descriptions of problems in the inner city, particularly those related to business activity followed by sophisticated

"Establishment" explanations of why the problems were inevitable. Although the discussion produced unresolved tension between the groups, an uneasy truce was achieved around an "Establishment" proposed joint project. But the "youth" subsequently rejected that project and withdrew in a caucus to "get their shit together." Several hours later they returned to propose an alternative project, which the "Establishment" group reluctantly accepted.

Although the project was accepted at the dialogue, it failed to flourish. The "Establishment" representatives lived up to their commitment to facilitate the beginning of the project, but the combination of technical difficulties, poor planning, and a lack of interest from the "youth" group led to the project's demise a month later. The two groups did not meet again in spite of encouragement from the foundation.

D. Cooperation

This dialogue took place in the same city as Dialogue C, but with different participants. The "Establishment" representatives came from large corporations and philanthropic organizations; the "youth" representatives were recruited from the Appalachian, black, Polish, and counterculture communities. A facilitator interviewed all the "Establishment" participants about hopes for the dialogue, and the "youth" participants met several times with facilitators to get to know one another before the dialogue itself began.

The dialogue again began with introductions of the participants, and moved to discussion of the problems of the city from the perspec-

tives of both groups. This discussion resulted in agreements and disagreements both within and between the groups; it became clear that the "youth" could learn from "Establishment" analysis, and the "Establishment" could learn from "youth" direct experience. Halfway through the dialogue, the "youth" group presented a project proposal they had devised in cooperation with an "Establishment" participant late the previous night. Though the proposed project was not accepted as a joint project, it did provide the base for discussion of a variety of possible projects.

Ultimately several projects were devised during the dialogue to be implemented by mixed teams of "Establishment" and "youth" participants. Most of those projects were in fact pursued, and some of them developed local sources of long term funding and support. The participants met as a group several months later to discuss their progress, and subgroups of participants have continued to work together for a variety of shared goals.

III. INTERVENTION IN VERTICAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

These four cases will be used to illustrate four conceptual perspectives on the activities of the third parties involved. The four perspectives are interrelated and overlapping, but they emphasize different aspects of the intervention in the vertical intergroup relations described in the cases.

A. Diffusing the Impact of Power Asymmetries.

The existence of power differences between parties may have effects on both. Superiors, for instance, may not understand what resources their subordinates can bring to cooperation: subordinates may be reluctant to run the risks of clear and open communications. When effective cooperation turns on explicit communication of relevant information, the tendency of power differences to sharply limit both the ability to hear and the ability to communicate is problematic.

The impact of power differences on the dialogues varied, but in most cases the vast difference in social position of the participants did not fetter communications as much as might be expected. In retrospect both structural and interactional phenomena contributed to "evening the odds" at the dialogues.

Two structural aspects of the dialogues helped to diffuse the power differences. First, the "youth" and the "Establishment" participants were not highly interdependent in their ordinary lives, as they might have been had they worked in the same organizations. Although they came from very different places in the social hierarchy, the "Establishment" participants had relatively little direct power over the "youth" participants. Consequently the "youth" participants were less constrained than others with a bigger stake in "the system" might be faced by the same "Establishment" representatives. Second, participants were asked to come to the dialogue as individuals rather than as representatives. Attending as representatives of their very different constituencies would have pressed par-

ticipants to focus on the power differences; as individuals, however, participants were freer to relate to one another openly. The general de-emphasis of roles allowed participants to interact on the basis of interpersonal qualities and to remain relatively unhampered by conflicting expectations of their constitutencies. In contrast to this general trend, the "Youth" representatives' ability to negotiate for the community organization and the "Establishment's" ability to negotiate for their businesses was critical to the "Withdrawal" case. Ultimately tensions between thoes two constituencies eroded support for continued interaction of their representatives before many interpersonal bonds could be established.

Power differences were also affected by several "interactional" aspects of the dialogues. First, dealing with the differences between "youth" and "Establishment" at all seemed to require that the "youth" group -- which was typically selected from a broad spectrum of disadvantaged groups, many of whom were in conflict with one another -- "get itself together." This unification took place late in the dialogue in the "Fight" case, and during the preparation for the dialogue in the "Cooperation" case. Some level of internal solidarity among the subordinate group seemed a prerequisite for dealing directly with their superiors. Second, the subordinate group needed to demonstrate the resources it brought to the exchange. Thus the community organization was uniquely able to screen its members for potential employees in the "Withdrawal" case, and the youth had experiential information about life in their areas that was unavailable to the "Establishment" partici-

pants in the "Fight" and "Cooperation" dialogues. Finally, the development of a sense of power by the subordinate group was typically signalled by their emergence as a source of initiative. Thus in the "Fight" case, the "youth's" rejection of the first project and withdrawal for a caucus heralded their arrival as an "equal" partner in the enterprise, as did the "youth's" presentation of a full-blown project in the "Cooperation" dialogue. In both cases the change from a passive to an assertive group presence was an important shift in the interactional dynamics that made relatively equal cooperation possible, albeit not inevitable.

It may be that dealing with the power asymmetries between the parties in some fashion is a critical first step in vertical intergroup intervention. As long as the subordinate group feels that it's survival is at stake, it is unrealistic to expect it to do other than hoard its resources and blunt its disagreements. It is not necessary, from these cases, that the groups be equal on all dimensions; but cooperation may require some minimal level of parity be attained. This notion is consistent with suggestions from the areas of interpersonal relations (Walton, 1969) and industrial relations (Deutsch, 1965; Nightengale, 1973) that constructive management of differences is difficult where there are serious differences in the power of the parties.

Diffusing the power differences as a first step to vertical intergroup intervention suggests that third parties may have to take an active role in "evening the odds." The third party's efforts to help

the "youth" group "get itself together" before the "Cooperation" dialogue is a case in point. But such activities are not "neutral" in the sense that is usually expected of a third party; they amount to active help to one of the parties. Successful intervention into vertical intergroup conflicts, however, may well require that the third party violate a rigid neutrality to create the conditions prerequisite to cooperation (cf. Lune & Cormick, 1973).

B. Managing Boundaries and Organizing Premises.

The definition of social system boundaries and their permeability to inputs and outputs are critically important to the system's functioning (Rice, 1965; Alderfer, 1975). Associated with the nature of system boundaries are organizing premises that define the system's raison d'etre and its central mission. Boundaries and organizing premises are mutually influencing; new boundaries may imply changed organizing premises, and a shift in premises may suggest new boundaries. Boundaries and organizing premises effect and are effected by intersystem relations. Thus, in intergroup cooperation, the boundaries of the groups are permeable to communications from one another, and the relationship between the two also is bounded and has some organizing premise for its existence. In intergroup conflict, in contrast, the boundaries between the two groups are less permeable to communications from each other, the boundary around the intergroup relationship becomes attenuated, and the organizing premises of the groups may reflect the conflict.

At least three levels of boundaries and organizing premises are relevant to understanding the events of the dialogues: (1) the level of the intergroup system (e.g., the dialogue as a whole), (2) the level of the participating groups (e.g., "youth," "Establishment"), (3) the level of the individual participants as representatives of external groups (e.g., blacks, Doe Manufacturing). The evolution of boundaries and organizing premises at one level has important impacts on other levels.

The overall task of the dialogues was the creation of a cooperative intergroup relationship where none had been before. The new relationship had to develop a boundary and an acceptable organizing premise to be viable. It must also successfully interact with a larger social environment that had previously minimized constructive contact between its members. The "withdrawal" dialogue, for example, fell victim to environmental invasion -- like the attempted murder publicity -- early in its existence.

The development of intergroup cooperation rested in turn on the differentiation of groups without them becoming locked in unmanageable conflict. In the "Communications" dialogue, the "youth" and "Establishment" participants never did become two clearly defined groups, and so the potential energy of their different resources was never mobilized. In the "Fight" dialogue, in contrast, the two groups were differentiated, but the differentiation process led the "youth" group to adopt an organizing premise of "Beat the Establishment!" -- a poor premise on which to found efforts to

cooperate. Only in the "Cooperation" dialogue were the groups clearly differentiated without losing the capacity to integrate themselves in cooperative projects.

Finally, as the development of an intergroup relationship rested on the development of group identities, so the development of group identities rested on the way in which individuals came to terms with the group memberships and implicit representative roles they they brought to the workshop. In the "Fight" dialogue, for example, a relatively homogeneous "Establishment" group -- representatives of essentially con-competitive organizations and cultures -- faced heterogeneous "youth" group -- representatives of a variety of often competitive ethnic and cultural groups. In spite of the invitation to come as a person rather than a group representative, it was not easy for some of the young people to work with others. Indeed, in the "Fight" dialogue it was not until the relations with the "Establishment" had deteriorated to open conflict that the "youth" became a solidary group, and they did so around a "Beat the Establishment" premise that boded ill for the long term cohesiveness of the dialogue. A similar potential problem in the "Cooperation" dialogue was mitigated by early work to "build" the "youth" group's ability to manage its own differences so that it would not be forced into defensive cohesion that would foreclose cooperation.

It is all too clear that the boundaries and organizing premises <u>within</u> a group can seriously effect the evolutions of boundaries and organizing premises <u>between</u> it and others. But it also seems clear

that that evolutionary process can be influenced by third parties. Much of the previous work on intervening in intergroup relations can be reconceptualized in terms of management of boundaries and organizing premises. Thus "intergroup therapy" that brings together warring groups to share perceptions and to differentiate their stereotypes of one another (E.G., Blake, Shepard and Mouton, 1974; Blake, Mouton, and Sloma, 1965) amounts to an effort to make the groups' boundaries more permeable to information. The work on the use of "super ordinate goals" which both groups value but neither can achieve without the other's cooperation (Sherif, 1958) amounts to the development of a new organizing premise at the intergroup level. The dialogues discussed here were efforts by a third party to create a boundary and an organizing premise for a relationship that had not existed before, and the the third party work with the "youth" and "Establishment" groups before the "Cooperation" dialogue were efforts to shape group boundaries and organizing premises to promote intergroup cooperation.

C. Influencing Interaction Patterns

The patterns of interaction within and between groups are at once symptoms of and contributors to the tensions between them. When groups come into conflict, there are likely to be substantial differences between the interaction patterns within the groups and these between them. Within groups in conflict the interaction patterns are likely to be characterized by "groupthink" (Janis, 1972),

in which dissent is suppressed to preserve the illusion of unanimity in the face of external threats. Between groups in conflict, the interaction is likely to be characterized by "blame-casting and deterrence" (Sherif, 1966), which has the effect of further escalating the conflict. The patterns of suppressing internal dissent while escalating external conflict may be interdependent; the external conflict offers an opportunity to vent the feelings suppressed internally. If these patterns are mutually reinforcing, improving the relationship between the groups will require changing both external and internal interaction patterns in the direction of a balanced mix of conflict and support. There are some indications that confronting differences and working them through is associated with more effective performance (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967), and ideally in intergroup relations such confrontation would take place both within and between the groups involved.

The dialogues offered an opportunity to observe the development of interaction patterns where none existed before; although some of the "Establishment" participants were acquainted, neither of the groups had any independent or pre-established interaction patterns before the dialogue. Perhaps to most useful comparisons can be made between the "Fight" and "Cooperation" dialogues, which were similar in many respects but vastly different in outcome.

The "Fight" dialogue began with mixed pairs introducing themselves, and then moved into discussion of the city's problems as a prelude to the search for a joint project. The discussion took

the form of "youth" participants raising problems (e.g., pollution, poor schools, unemployment) and the "Establishment" participants offering sophisticated economic analyses that implied that those problems could not be helped. The "Establishment" group was surprised at the lack of economic understanding displayed by the "youth;" the "youth" was frustrated at the "Establishment" "unwillingness to listen." "Establishment" participants actively supported one another; the "youth" participants focused largely on their arguments with the "Establishment" and paid little attention to one another until they walked out on the first "railroaded" project to "get their shit together." At that point the interaction patterns within and between the two groups had much of the character of a classic intergroup conflict. The "youth" participants' interest in a project--even their own--was by then far outweighed by their enthusiasm for "victory." The final project had numerous defects rooted in the "youth" group's unwillingness to risk their new cohesion in really examining the project, and the "Establishment" groups" inability to cooperate effectively. In short, the interaction patterns evolved in the "Fight" dialogue were characterized by "groupthink" within and "blame-casting between the groups.

In the "Cooperation" dialogue, in contrast, quite different patterns emerged. After a similar introduction process, the participants again discussed the problems of the city. But problems were raised by both "Establishment" and "youth" participants. When an "Establishment" participant offered an economic analysis to rebut

a "youth" description of a problem, another "Establishment" participant rebutted him. When a "youth" participant overdramatized problems in the inner city, another "youth" participant suggested that her experience was different. In short, the differences between the groups, although they were serious and much discussed, did not obscure the differences within the groups, which were also discussed at some length. The tension between the groups peaked when the "youth" group presented a proposal, devised the night before and then kept confidential for six hours. The initial "Establishment" response was antagonistic, and the third parties noted that the "youth" group had been manipulative in their presentation; both "youth" and "Establishment" participants then agreed that the facilitators were "too sensitive to manipulation," and the discussion of alternative projects continued with a tacit agreement not to press for adoption of the proposal. Ultimately several projects to be implemented by mixed subgroups from the dialogue were adopted. The interaction patterns that characterized the "Cooperation" dialogue involved willingness to discuss differences and to offer support both within and between the two groups; in contrast to the "Fight" dialogue, the interaction patterns within and between the two groups were similar rather than drastically different, though the initial starting point was almost identical.

The third parties influenced the evolution of interaction patterns in these two dialogues in several ways: (1) in composing the groups, (2) in setting expectations, and (3) in intervening in the dialogue process itself.

The composition of the "Fight" dialogue was marked by a relatively homogeneous "Establishment" group -- composed almost entirely of corporate chief executives -- and a very heterogeneous "youth" group -- composed from representatives of a variety of disadvantaged groups in the city, many of them bitter rivals. The homogeneity of the "Establishment" group made it easy for them to clump together and form an "united front" which in turn put pressure on the "youth" to do likewise and set up the pattern of unity within and antagonism between the groups. In the "Cooperation" dialogue, increased diversity of the "Establishment" representatives made it easier to develop patterns of conflict and support both within and between the groups.

Since there was little time for prework before the "Fight" dialogue, many participants on both sides had only vague and somewhat threatening expectations of the event: "Establishment" participants were suspicious of the "youth" and the third parties, and "youth" participants were suspicious of the "Establishment," the third parties, and each other. Before the "Cooperation" dialogue, in contrast, the third parties had extensive discussions with each of the "Establishment" representatives, and met several times with the "youth" group. The "Establishment" discussions helped to set constructive participant expectations for the dialogue, the third parties, and the "youth group;" the "youth" group meetings allowed for expectation setting about the "Establishment," the third parties, and the other "youth" participants. It seems likely, in retrospect, that constructive

expectations of the "Cooperative" dialogue contributed greatly to a relatively relaxed and friendly atmosphere by tending from the outset to elicit the expected constructive behavior (cf. Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968).

Finally, third party interventions in and structuring of the dialogue process contribute to the development of interaction patterns. In the "Fight" dialogue an early consultant observation on the "Establishment's" tendency to respond to problems with sophisticated rationalizations may have contributed to the polarization process; certainly a consultant question about commitment that preceded the "youth" rejection of the first project was seen by the "Establishment" as outright sabotage. Similarly, an argument between two third parties about the purposes of the dialogue on the first night of the "Cooperation" dialogue may have contributed to the legitimation of internal disagreement within the groups, and the third party remarks about manipulation after the "youth" proposal clearly had the effect of defusing intergroup tension. The third parties both effect and are effected by the process of the dialogue itself; the third parties came away from the "Cooperation" dialogue feeling effective and able to influence events, and they came away from the "Fight" dialogue feeling helpless and paralyzed by the experience.

D. Institutionalizing Change

However difficult it may be to develop vertical intergroup cooperation in a retreat situation, it is more difficult to preserve it in the "real world" from which the retreat protects it. The real test of

changed relations is their survival back in the environmental situation that spawned the original problems; can cooperation withstand the forces that press for further conflict, like the concerns of representatives' constituencies or the re-emphasis of the power asymmetries? The longitudinal results of the dialogues suggest that at least two issues are closely related to long-term cooperation between the participant groups: (1) the commitment of participants to some focus of future cooperation, and (2) the development of mechanisms to facilitate that cooperation.

The commitment of participants to dialogue projects varied across the cases. The "Establishment" commitment to the project in the "Withdrawal" dialogue, never cemented in a retreat, evaporated under the pressures from their constituencies. The "youth" commitment to the "Fight" dialogue project, generated from their concern with "victory" over the "Establishment," cooled rapidly. The "Cooperation" dialogue managed to generate enduring commitment in many participants, at least partly because several small subgroups were created to work on projects of special appeal to their members, rather than undertake a single compromise project to which none were particularly committed but all could accept. If cooperation did not offer some valuable outcome to members of both groups, there was little likelihood of long term commitment to a cooperative relationship.

Preservation of the cooperative relations also required the development of mechanisms to facilitate that cooperation. Partici-

pants from the "Communications" dialogue continued to meet occasionally for social reasons, but no project had been adopted to compel more focused cooperation or the development of formal structures. Similarly, one close interpersonal relationship evolved from the "Withdrawal" dialogue, but that relationship too depended on social bonds rather than some common project. Although the abortive project in the "Fight" dialogue pulled together some participants to work for several weeks, no further contact between "youth" and "Establishment" participants occurred after its failure in spite of tentative initiatives from the "youth." The "Cooperation" dialogue gave rise to several new interpersonal relationships, but even more contact between participants occurred around project work. Literally dozens of contacts focused on tasks in addition to a variety of social events, including a dinner for all participants. Within a few months, a number of formal mechanisms developed, including contractual relationships and funding arrangements to support projects, and extensive use was made of third party follow-up resources.

Third parties engaged in promoting vertical intergroup cooperation may influence the institutionalization of change relations by (1) helping the parties develop realistic commitments to cooperation, (2) helping them invent mechanisms to focus and facilitate future cooperation, and (3) acting as continuing third-party resources to help the parties manage strains on the new relationship. Although the cases described here offer only one instance in which any sub-

stantial institutionalization of change took place, experience with the "Cooperation" dialogue suggests that continued third party work to help the parties manage the interface between them is important to preserving the cooperation, at least in the short run.

IV. SUMMARY

I have described four cases of intervention in vertical intergroup relations. The interventions were designed to promote better communications and long term cooperation on a joint project, and one of the four did in fact succeed in producing those outcomes. I have used the four cases as the basis for discussing four perspectives on intervention in vertical intergroup relations. Examination from the "power asymmetry" perspective suggests that the power differences may have to be dealt with prior to other issues, and that rigid adherence to the well-established "neutral" third party role may undercut the process of "evening the odds" required for cooperation. The "boundaries and organizing premises" perspective emphasizes the third party's potential contribution to the evolution of group identities and ideologies, and the possible impacts of developments at one level to events at another. The "interaction patterns" perspective emphasizes the dynamic qualities of evolving interaction that may lead to changed relations. And the "institutionalization" perspective focuses on the importance of longitudinal supports for maintenance changes in the context of a larger social system that may be antagonistic to them.

These perspectives are not intended to constitute an integrated theory of vertical intergroup intervention. They do suggest that vertical intergroup relations present dynamics that differ from intergroup relations where power is not at issue, that those dynamics imply different roles for third parties who would intervene constructively, and that -- at least in some circumstances -- efforts to improve vertical intergroup relations can be successful.

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